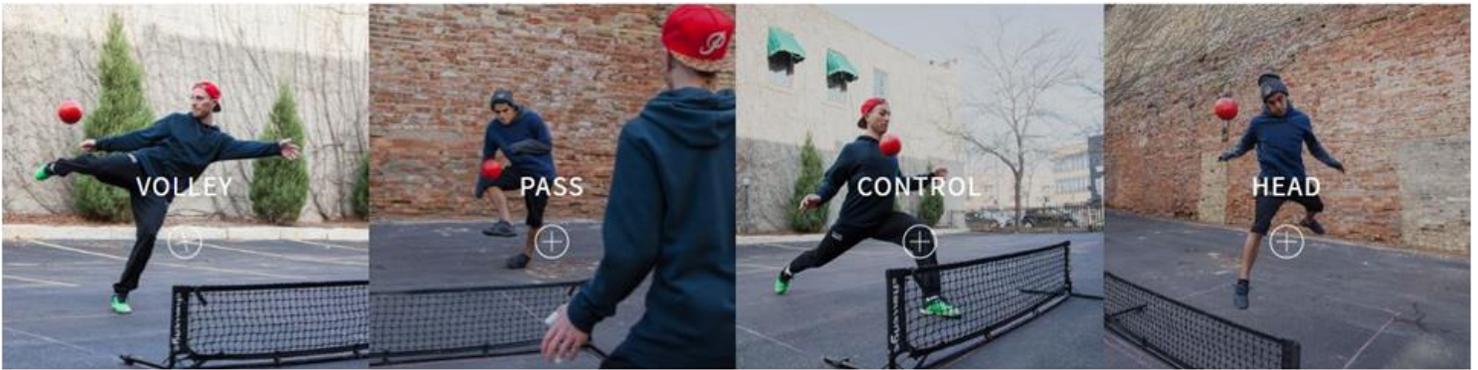


# Futpong for K-12



By Rick Davis - Member of the Soccer Hall of Fame and former captain of the U.S. National Soccer Team

**Benefit of Futpong:** Futpong is a wildly fun skills-building game that is adaptable to a wide range of abilities and fitness levels. Plus, you may help uncover and develop the next great American soccer player.

## Physical Education Objectives of Futpong:

- Movement/physical activity. Futpong is so fun that kids do not even realize they are getting vigorous exercise.
- Motor skill development, particularly hand to eye and foot to eye coordination
- Mental and physical speed development (making decisions and reacting)
- Body control and restraint. To excel at Futpong requires a soft touch.
- Developing and learning the importance of court position, footwork, and game strategy

**Note:** Eye-foot coordination varies widely among students, thus the Futpong small ball will be challenging for some at first. For students that are having trouble with our ball we recommend starting with a larger ball, e.g., a volleyball is a good size and weight. Students should progress to using the Futpong ball after some practice. See rules/court setup for how to get started.

## Module 1. Warm-up and Introductory Activities (suggested time 10-20 minutes)

**Objective:** To warm up and become comfortable with the Futpong ball and game movement.

**Equipment:** Futpong ball or other similar-sized ball. Kids love our small red ball, and the ball's size, soft touch, and uniform bounce is a key to development. Other balls such as a regulation-size soccer ball, volleyball, or kick-ball may also be used for these activities.

### Activities:

1. Use hands to get familiar with the ball and its bounce
  - a. Bounce and/or dribble the ball with both hands, first right hand, then left hand
  - b. Toss and catch by yourself or with a partner
  - c. Make "Figure Eights", first on the ground between feet and then in the air between knees
  - d. Toss and Hops (side to side movement with a hop or side shuffle while bouncing and/or catching balls)
2. Feet and body activities
  - a. With ball stationary on ground, lift foot and lightly touch top of ball with foot (alternate feet)
    - i. Time challenge (see how many touches students can get in 30 or 60 seconds)
  - b. Using bottom front of foot roll ball forward, backward, right and left.
  - c. Ball dribbles (emphasizing soft touches and practicing with different parts of foot)
  - d. Ball juggling - an introduction to ball juggling with feet and thighs
    - i. Use right and/or left foot, one touch & catch (allow bounces to alter difficulty)
    - ii. Use right and/or left thigh, one touch & catch (allow bounces to alter difficulty)

- iii. Progress toward alternating feet and repeated juggles without bounces or catches

## Module 2. Introductory Activities on the Futpong Court (suggested time 10- 20 minutes)

**Objective:** Become comfortable with footwork, game movements, court size, etc.

**Equipment:** Balls, Futpong nets, and court markers (cones, tape, chalk). These activities can be done with 1-3 (or even more) players per each side of the net. For multiple players, alternate every time the ball crosses the net. *Note: if you don't have enough Futpong nets, tie a string or rope between two chairs.*

**Activities:** The following activities can be done in groups of 2-6 students per court.

1. Hands: Bounce ball across net and catch with hands. Add difficulty and exercise by requiring players to touch net or end line before returning ball.
2. Feet and thigh: Begin the following essential Futpong moves (emphasize a soft touch)
  - a. Using your foot or thigh bounce ball across the net to partner to catch
  - b. Repeat step a. and have the opponent return the ball with their foot or thigh. Make sure ball bounces in opponent's court before they return it.
  - c. Try above by alternating use of the right and left foot or thigh.
  - d. Make it a game, with the objective being the number of times the ball successfully crosses the net.

## Module 3. Futpong Game (Let the Games Begin) (suggested time approx. 5 minutes per game when keeping score)

**Objective:** Have fun, build motor skills, gain physical fitness

**Equipment:** Net and balls

See separate document for Futpong Rules and Court Setup or make up your own rules (think table tennis and soccer).

The best format for groups of players with varying ability is **pool play**. In **pool play**, winning players advance to harder courts as they win the game. Set the nets up in a line and assign or have players choose where they want to begin on the court. One end of the line is for "beginners" and the other end is for "advanced." Set a time period (e.g. 3-5 minutes) and have players keep score. At the end of the 3-5 minutes, the person with more points moves up the ladder one court at a time and the person with fewer points moves down the ladder. The lower point person at the beginning and the high point person at the end remain in the same spot. This allows players to naturally migrate to the player that most matches their level. If there are large variations in players' abilities, you might try this with two rows of 5 nets each. One of the 5 net sets could use a volleyball, beach ball, or even balloon (for kindergarten age) if the Futpong ball proves too difficult.

**Game Variations:** There are lots of variations of Futpong, such as 1v1, 2v1, 2v2, 3v3, one touch, two touch, with and without bounces, etc. Perhaps allow students some free time to make up their own rules. Here are a few others.

- For beginners, allow players to catch each time the ball crosses the net and bounces successfully in the court.
- Allow multiple touches to control ball before playing across net (try with and without hands, with and without bounce).
- Rather than keep score, see how many times players can consecutively complete play across the net.
- Limit number of touches before playing across net (must be 2 touches, must be 1 touch, etc.)

